S.U.N.
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THE USERS GROUP FOR SINCLAIR & TIMEX COMPUTERS

FEBRUARY 1983

What's Under the S.U.N.

FELLOW NETWORKERS: This months' bulletin brings more HELP! and reviews of some exciting software products. The following announcements will also be of interest to you. Please call or write if you have any comments or questions about these items or about any of our services.

NEWSLETTER: Due to the recent explosion in products, services, and information on the ZX/TS computers, starting with January 1983 we will publish a newsletter every other month. Bulletins will still come to you on months between newsletters. There will be no new charges to those of you who now hold S.U.N. cards, either at this time or upon membership renewal.

SCHEMATICS: Because of the many requests for ZX80-81, TS1000, and 16K RAM pack schematics, we must now have a self-addressed, stamped envelope and $.15 per schematic. We aren't trying to rip you off. We're just trying to offer you as many services as possible in the least expensive manner.

BONUS POINTS: If you know someone who might want to join the Network, make sure that they mention your name. The dues for those joining in 1983 are $16.00 per year. For each new member that you get to join, you will receive 200 lines of software credit for the program exchange.

PROGRAM EXCHANGE: We receive about 35 tapes a month from commercial distributors as well as members. They are all reviewed, but putting the information into the newsletter runs about 30 days behind receipt. A member who submits a program that works, receives his credit immediately, even if the program does not appear in the next issue of the newsletter. If we have problems, you will hear from us within 10 to 20 days after we get your software, so, no news is probably good news!

PROGRAMMING HELP: Stuck with a problem? Send us your program on tape along with a description of what you're trying to do. We will perform necessary modifications on the program, then return it to you on your tape. Please enclose $1.00 to cover mailing costs. If the tape quality is too poor to read, we will send it back but cannot refund your $1.00. Please use digitally certified tapes such as the BASF C-20's sold through our co-op.

CO-OP NEWS: Currently we are selling C-20 cassette tapes at $0.71 each. Shipping charges are $0.05 per tape, with a minimum shipping charge of $1.00. Boxes for the tapes are $0.15 each, labels $0.01 each; no additional shipping charges if box and label count equals cassette count. These are BASF computer cassettes with a 100% guarantee, so if you get a bad tape, it will be replaced with no charge for the tape.

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CO-OP NEWS CONTINUED

We have found a source on the east coast for a 16K word-processor software package that includes machine code and many pokes and peeks. It will sell for $10.00 plus $1.00 for shipping and handling through TimeWise, Inc. the name we have chosen for our co-op. This software comes in two versions: one will drive the Timex/Sinclair printer as well as the Mindware MW-100, the other drives the CAI thermal printer. This tape has many edit functions, comes with better than average documentation, and runs very fast. It's a good bargin.

We have also found a 16K educational program to teach students from first to sixth grade the four basic math functions. It is extremely friendly to youngsters; using the students name throughout, it incorporates error trapping routines to lock-out incorrect entries. In addition to teaching children, novice programmers can learn how to use some helpful sub-routines by studying the program listing. The price is $8.00 plus $1.00 for shipping and handling.

In our January newsletter we reviewed a power line filter for ZX/TS computers, that lists at $19.95. We have made a special bulk purchase of these filters and they will sell through our co-op for $14.95 plus $1.00 shipping and handling.

All checks for these items and future bargins should be made out to TimeWise Inc. Illinois residents please remember to add 6% for sales tax.

FUTURE ARTICLES: Upcoming reviews will include both game and utility programs from Timex. We will also discuss "fast-loader" software that will cut down those long (SAVE)s and (LOAD)s to a fifth or less of what you've become accustomed to. Scheduled hardware reviews include Timex's printer, two disc drives, a high-res color graphics board, and a complete package consisting of a 40 column printer, mass storage device with speeds 50 times faster than cassette, and a modem. This package sells for less than $500. We can't wait to share all this information with you.

TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY ?

SOFTWARE

FROGGER by Timex

For those of you who purchased your ZX/TS to avoid trips to the arcade, Timex has now released their version of 'FROGGER'! This is the official, licensed version of the game, and plays just like the one that you pump quarters into except for the lack of sound.

After loading this game into your 16K computer, you must answer questions as to the number of players and the player skill level; now the action starts. Your poor frog must be hopped across the busy freeway. This thoroughfare is constantly filled with rushing cars and trucks that all seem to take delight in flattening any little amphibians. You must quickly press the proper keys to avoid traffic. A safe jump brings you 10 points. Having successfully crossed the highway, your little leaper is faced with a stream filled with ravenous crocodiles and treacherous diving turtles. Complicating matters, a timer inexorably runs on while you attempt to avoid meeting an early demise. Every time the clock ticks, you lose 5 points.

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FROGGER CONTINUED

If you gobble an insect or escort home a lady frog, you will be awarded 200 bonus points. If you get all your frogs safely home, you receive 50 points per frog plus 1000 bonus points. For 10000 points, you receive another frog. An excellent feature of this game is that if you are playing well, but at a critical stage, and the phone rings, you may stop the game in mid-action and then pick up where you left off at your leisure.

This cassette will have a retail price of $17.95 at your local store that carries Timex/Sinclair products. We found the game to be exciting, hard to beat, and entertaining for the whole family.

GAMES SAMPLER & MIND VS MACHINE by 2-BIT Software

Since we have not received any decent software packages for non-expanded ZX/TS memories recently, our last few issues have all covered 16K programs. 2-BIT software's two new 2K packages has solved this problem.

The "Games Sampler" has four BASIC programs that may entertain you for hours. The first we tried was "Kamikaze Fly". In this game, you control the tongue of a frog hungrily watching a fly zip across the screen. By pushing a key you may gobble it up, but the altitude of the fly varies to make it tricky. This game keeps score of your hits and misses. "Sketch Pad" is like etch-a-sketch, only you may select from three pen "colors". "Navajo Rugs" automatically generates an ever-changing kaleidscope of patterns on your TV or monitor. Afraid to get out of bed? Use "Biorythms" to tell you which days you will be at your best, and which days to stay under the covers.

Four more BASIC programs are to be found on the "Mind vs Machine" cassette. The first two, "Tic Tac Toe I" and "Tic Tac Toe II", are versions of this time-honored game with different computer strategies employed by each. Master the first, then lose to the second! In "Chocolate Truffles", the computer randomly selects a number of treats as well as the maximum that can be taken at any one time. Both you and the computer take turns removing truffles. The player removing the last treat wins. The last challenge is titled "Superspy". Your ZX/TS has smuggled five coded messages out from behind the Silicon Curtain. You must substitute letters to decode them. Each time you play, the computer uses a new code.

We found both tapes to be worth their $9.95 price. They fill a void for those without RAM packs. Each game can be listed and we find them to be excellent examples of tight, efficient BASIC programming. Both novice and expert can learn by looking at the coding of these programs. One note to remember, these are 2K programs and will not work on the 1K Sinclair unless you have additional memory. These software packages can be purchased from: 2-BIT SOFTWARE, Emerson & Stern Associates, 13674 Boquita Drive, Del Mar, CA,92014.

HELP!!!!

When you buy a program that is listable save the program on a blank cassette. As long as this is for your own use in protecting yourself against the day when age causes the tape to break or stray magnetic fields scramble the program. As we understand it, you will not be in violation of the law.

If you have a 9.75 V power supply for your computer you may have overheating problems. The best way to prevent damage is to build a power supply that delivers 8-8.5 V. If you wish to buy one, a good 9 volt model is made by Calrad, part # 45-766. Suggested list price is $7.85 at electronic supply shops.

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